

## ABSTRACT

A sub-sampling portion (101) sub-samples images of data corresponding to the left and right viewpoints. A joining method selector (104) selects the joining method that  
5 minimizes the discontinuity at the boundary in the joined image when the sub-sampled images of data are joined. A joining portion (102) joins the plurality of images data, based on the selected joining method. An encoder (103) encodes the joined image data, and a joining method encoder (105)  
10 encodes the information of the joining method. A multiplexer (106) multiplexes these pieces of coded data. In this way, the continuity of the joined image is improved, whereby the coding efficiency is enhanced.